

Why God is Right to Damn Wrong, Part 5 - Romans 1:29-32 – April 10th, 2011

- This is part five of a series titled; "Why God is Right to Damn Wrong," and in it, we will reach the end of both, this series, and this chapter.
- The Apostle Paul has been rising from the pages of the book of Romans, and arguing the case for God's righteousness, and Man's sinfulness.
- Furthermore, in so doing, man will be found guilty, in this the courtroom of all eternity, before the God, Who is the just judge of the universe.

12. They are filled with depraved wickedness (Verses 29-31)

(29) They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, (30) slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; (31) they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

- v29 They've become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity, being full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice and gossip.
- v30 Paul's list continues with slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, boastful, invent ways of doing evil, and they disobey their parents.
- v31 He ends the list describing those who had been given over to their depravity as becoming senseless, faithless, heartless, and ruthless.

- There are a number of details that can be easily missed in reading this list, the first of which is where Paul says; "they have become filled..."
- This implies that there is a descending into this evil and wickedness which further substantiates the evidence of God having given them over.
- It's as if Paul paints a picture on the canvass of their depravity, portraying how they, of their own volition, have let go of, the hand of God.

- Once they let go, God let's go and gives them over to that which they become filled with as they descend into every kind of evil wickedness.
- They go down into this dark abyss of greed, depravity, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, hatred, insolence, arrogance, etc.
- Actually, I counted a total of 21 things that man had become filled with, in that which Paul, by the Holy Spirit, lists here in this letter to Rome.

- I know it will come as some relief to you, when I tell you, that I won't go through all 21 of them, however, I do want to look at a few of them.
- In order to do this, I would like to ask you, and I ask this of myself as well, to give the Holy Spirit permission to show you, you, in this list.
- What we'll do is take each one and pose it in a question form, so as to have a better understanding of what each of these mean in our day.

1. **Envy:** Has my heart been filled with hate towards someone else because of what they possess, who they are, or even the ease of their life?
2. **Murder:** Have I become so filled with anger in my heart for someone, that I've secretly wished harm upon them, or even that they would die?
3. **Strife:** Am I one who is given to arguing with others, or contentious and antagonistic towards others, even to the point that I like a good fight?
4. **Gossip:** Am I nosy, and one who talks about people in ways I would never talk directly to the one I'm gossiping about, and even enjoying it?
5. **Slander:** Do I assassinate the character and reputation of another with no regard to the harm I cause even bearing false witness in a rumor?

- There's another detail here that we need to see. Notice how gossip and disobeying parents is listed along with murder and being a God-hater.
- Also, this list may remind you of a similar list the Apostle Paul writes of when he pen's his second letter to Timothy describing the last days.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 NIV But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. (2) People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, (4) treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— (5) having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

13. They are knowingly continuing to do evil (Verse 32)

(32) Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

- v32 Knowing God's judgment on those doing them deserves death, they not only continue doing them, they approve of those practicing them.
- Here's another one of those places where we are able to discover the "why" behind the "what," of both doing the evil and approving of the evil.
- The reason "why" they do "what" they do is because they've "disapproved" of God, and in so doing they have "approved" of unspeakable evil.

- In other words, man has created an environment that will be conducive to his evil, in so much as to have it both approved of, and accepted in.
- The seriousness of man's deliberateness cannot be overstated, in that man knows God's righteous decree is that such things deserve death.
- Yet, not only do they continue in it, they manufacture an infrastructure, issuing their own permit, giving approval to those who also practice it.

One commentator aptly wrote; "Paul's punch-line is that not only do they do what they know they ought not to do, they create a society in which these things are accepted and approved. They want others to approve of them, and so they approve of others when they behave like this. Every time I condone behavior in others, I make it easier to do it myself, because I create a climate of public opinion in which this is acceptable.

- As we bring this series in for a landing on the runway of our own Christian lives, I want to attempt a different approach with this plane of truth.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment as I ask a very vital question, and please know that it's one of which I am also asking of myself.
- Here it is; "have I become guilty of, what's been coined as, 'tabloid' Christianity?" Now, I'm keenly aware that you may not know what that is.

- Tabloid Christianity is when I as a Christian love to read about the wicked behavior of others because it makes me feel better about myself.
- Let's be honest shall we? If the truth be known, we are all prone to, and all guilty of, seeing this much the same way as a supermarket tabloid.
- There's a disconnect between us and God's Word because we derive a sick and sinful satisfaction in the smugness of our self-righteousness.

Isaiah 64:6a NKJV But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;...

Luke 18:9-14 NIV To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: (10) "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. (11) The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. (12) I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' (13) "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' (14) "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."